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ABSTRACT

A survey of 1985 Piedmont Virginia Community College (PVCC) graduates was conducted in June, 1985, to determine the effects of a PVCC education on the work lives and future educational prospects of these graduates. Surveys were distributed to students who attended graduation rehearsal and by mail. Study findings, based on responses from 67.3% of the 248 graduates of 1985, included the following: (1) the typical degree graduate was a female, full-time, day student, while the typical diploma or certificate graduate was a male, part-time, evening student; (2) 45.5% of the respondents were part-time students, compared to 24% in 1983; (3) the percentage of part-time associate in applied science graduates rose from 18% in 1983 to 46.2% in 1985; (4) over half of the 1985 graduates were working full-time in career fields related to their studies at PVCC; (5) only 21% of the associate in arts/associate in sciences graduates were employed full-time in career-related fields; (6) 13.2% were unemployed; (7) 30.5% indicated they would continue their college education; and (8) 48.3% of those planning to continue their education had already been accepted by institutions of higher education. The questionnaire and extensive data tables are appended. (LAL)

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RESULTS OF THE SURVEY OF THE PVCC GRADUATES OF THE CLASS OF 1985

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RESULTS OF THE SURVEY OF THE PVCC GRADUATES OF THE CLASS OF 1985

INTRODUCTION

Each year the graduating class of Piedmont Virginia Community College is surveyed to identify present activities and future plans. The purpose of the study is to determine what effect a PVCC education has on the work lives and future educational prospects of these graduates. More specifically, the following questions are addressed:

1. What general characteristics are typical of PVCC graduates?
2. What work characteristics are typical of PVCC graduates? How many graduates are working in job fields related to their study at PVCC, and how many are working in unrelated job fields? What is the unemployment rate of PVCC graduates?
3. How many PVCC graduates intend to pursue further educational study at four-year colleges or universities?
4. How many PVCC graduates intend to re-enter community colleges either as full-time or part-time students?
5. How does the current graduating class at PVCC differ in work characteristics and educational plans from previous classes?

METHODOLOGY

This year's survey is essentially a replication of last year's study. The same questionnaire was used, and it was completed by students who attended graduation rehearsal on June 14, 1985. Those

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students not attending graduation rehearsal were mailed copies of the questionnaire. The first mailing occurred during the last week of September, and the second occurred during the second week of November. These mailings were conducted later than usual because of changes in the Office of Institutional Research and Planning.

The questionnaire itself is similar to that used for PVCC's graduation surveys since the late 1970's. A copy is included in this report as Figure 1. Copies of the transmittal letters sent to non-respondents are also included in this report as Figures 2 and 3.

Responses to the questionnaire were tabulated counting an individual who received more than one degree, or one degree and a certificate or diploma, in the following order of priority: Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, Associate of Applied Science, certificate, and diploma. Information is contained in six tables which follow the same format as those in previous studies. Note, however, that a new table has been added showing work characteristics and educational plans by PVCC curriculum (Table 5), and longitudinal data have been expanded and presented in a new format (Table 6). Charts displaying important information have also been included in this report as Figures 4 through 7.

RESULTS

Of the 248 graduates of the Class of 1985, 167 responded to this survey. This yielded a 67.3 percent response rate, well below the 75 percent response rate which has been typical of graduate surveys since the late 1970's, but higher than last year's 65.6 percent

rate. Perhaps the response rate would have been higher if the questionnaires had been mailed during the summer rather than during the fall, but this seems somewhat unlikely given the declining trend since 1982 (see Table 6).

The typical degree graduate from PVCC in 1985 was a full-time, female, day student, while the typical diploma or certificate graduate was a part-time, male, evening student (see Table 1). In most respects, these characteristics are similar to those of previous classes.

An increase in the number of part-time graduates, however, has occurred over the last few years. In 1983 only 24% of the graduates was part-time; by 1984 the percentage had increased to 34%; this year, 45.5% of the graduates was part-time. This increase is largely the result of more part-time A.A.S. graduates. While the percentage of part-time A.A./A.S. and diploma/certificate graduates has fluctuated, the percentage of part-time A.A.S. graduates has steadily risen. In 1983 only 18% of the A.A.S. graduates was part-time; in 1984 the percentage was 27%; and in 1985 it was 46.2%.

As can be seen in Table 2, over half of the 1985 graduates are working full-time in career fields related to their studies at PVCC. This is especially true of the diploma/certificate and A.A.S. graduates. Only 21% of the A.A./A.S. graduates, though, are employed full-time in career-related fields. This might be accounted for by the fact that half of the A.A./A.S. graduates plans to continue immediately after graduation education full-time at a four-year college or university.

Only 22 of the 167 respondents indicated they were unemployed.

This unemployment rate of 13.2% is nearly half of what it was in 1984 and is the lowest rate of any graduating class since 1979 (see Table 6). This fact, coupled with the large number of graduates working full-time in job-related fields, reinforces the already prevalent notion that the job market is better than it has been in a number of years. Figure 4 graphically depicts employment characteristics of 1985 PVCC graduates.

There has been a modest decrease in the number and percentage of PVCC graduates going on to four-year colleges or universities (see Table 3). Fifty-one graduates, or 30.5% of all respondents, indicated they would continue their college education, and the vast majority of these (70.6%) intended to continue as full-time students. In 1984, fifty-eight graduates, or 34.9% of all respondents, planned to go on to four-year colleges or universities.

As might be expected, most of those going on to four-year colleges or universities were college transfer students who were awarded the A.A. or A.S. degrees. Of these, nearly half (48.3% or 28 students) had already been accepted to institutions of higher education, and exactly half (29 students) indicated that the institution selected was their first choice. Given these responses, it would seem that Piedmont is performing an excellent job in preparing students to continue their education.

Some students plan to continue their education not at a four-year college or university but at a community college. Thirty-seven of the 1985 graduates, or 22.2% of the respondents, indicated this, and all of these plan to study part-time (see Table 4). Twenty-seven percent of these received the A.A./A.S. degree at PVCC; 56.8%

received the A.A.S. degree; and 16.2% received certificates or diplomas. Most planned to begin their studies immediately (either in the summer or fall following graduation). Figure 5 shows the educational plans of the 1985 PVCC graduates.

Table 5 summarizes the work characteristics and educational plans of the 1985 graduates with the information tabulated by curriculum, as well as by degree. Table 6 summarizes these characteristics over a seven-year period of time. This longitudinal data is also depicted graphically in Figures 6 and 7. As has already been noted, more graduates are working in full-time, career-related jobs, and less students are unemployed, than at any time since 1979. Evidently, PVCC continues to graduate individuals who are successful in either finding employment or continuing their education.

TABLE 1: General Characteristics of PVCC Graduates, 1985

CATEGORY	AA/AS No.	AA/AS Pct.	AAS No.	AAS Pct.	DIPLOMA/ CERTIFICATE No.	DIPLOMA/ CERTIFICATE Pct.	TOTAL No.	TOTAL Pct.
Male	26	44.1%	26	28.0%	9	60.0%	61	36.5%
Female	33	55.9%	67	72.0%	6	40.0%	106	63.5%
Full-Time Student	41	69.5%	50	53.8%	0	0.0%	91	54.5%
Part-Time Student	18	30.5%	43	46.2%	15	100.0%	76	45.5%
Day Student	45	76.3%	68	73.1%	1	6.7%	114	68.3%
Evening Student	14	23.7%	25	26.9%	14	93.3%	53	31.7%
TOTAL RESPONDENTS	59	35.3%	93	55.7%	15	9.0%	167	100.0%

NOTE: Percentages are by column for each pair except for the bottom row (which is by row).

TABLE 2: Work Characteristics of PVCC Graduates, 1985

CATEGORY	AA/AS No.	AA/AS Pct.	AAS No.	AAS Pct.	DIPLOMA/ CERTIFICATE No.	DIPLOMA/ CERTIFICATE Pct.	TOTAL No.	TOTAL Pct.
Working Full-Time in Related Field	13	21.0%	65	60.7%	11	78.6%	89	53.3%
Working Part-Time in Related Field	7	11.3%	4	3.7%	1	7.1%	12	7.2%
Working Full-Time in Unrelated Field	9	14.5%	9	8.4%	1	7.1%	19	11.4%
Working Part-Time in Unrelated Field	6	9.7%	1	0.9%	0	0.0%	7	4.2%
Indicated Homemaker as Employment	4	6.5%	11	10.3%	0	0.0%	15	9.0%
Military Service	1	1.6%	1	0.9%	0	0.0%	2	1.2%
Unemployed at Time of Response	9	14.5%	13	12.1%	0	0.0%	22	13.2%
No Response to this Question	13	21.0%	3	2.8%	1	7.1%	17	10.2%
TOTAL RESPONDENTS	62	37.1%	107	64.1%	14	8.4%	167	100.0%

NOTE: Percentages are by column except for the bottom row. The sums of all columns or rows actually total 183, not 167, because a student can be entered simultaneously in more than one category.

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TABLE 3: Educational Plans for Attending Four-Year Colleges or Universities by PVCC Graduates, 1985

CATEGORY	AA/AS No.	AA/AS Pct.	AAS No.	AAS Pct.	DIPLOMA/ CERTIFICATE No.	DIPLOMA/ CERTIFICATE Pct.	TOTAL No.	TOTAL Pct.
WILL BEGIN COLLEGE DURING:								
Summer 1985	3	5.2%	0	0.0%	0	--	3	1.8%
Fall 1985	27	46.6%	5	5.3%	0	--	32	19.2%
Other	10	17.2%	6	6.3%	0	--	16	9.6%
Not Indicated	18	31.0%	84	88.4%	14	--	116	69.5%
WILL ATTEND COLLEGE:								
Full-Time	31	53.4%	5	5.3%	0	--	36	21.6%
Part-Time	8	13.8%	6	6.3%	0	--	14	8.4%
Not Indicated	1	1.7%	0	0.0%	0	--	1	0.6%
Not Applicable	18	31.0%	84	88.4%	14	--	116	69.5%
HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COLLEGE								
Yes	28	48.3%	3	3.2%	0	--	31	18.6%
No	8	13.8%	4	4.2%	0	--	12	7.2%
Not Indicated	4	6.9%	4	4.2%	0	--	8	4.8%
Not Applicable	18	31.0%	84	88.4%	14	--	116	69.5%
COLLEGE SELECTED WAS:								
First Choice	29	50.0%	5	5.3%	0	--	34	20.4%
Second Choice	1	1.7%	0	0.0%	0	--	1	0.6%
Not Indicated	10	17.2%	6	6.3%	0	--	16	9.6%
Not Applicable	18	31.0%	84	88.4%	14	--	116	69.5%
TOTAL RESPONDENTS	58	34.7%	95	56.9%	14	8.4%	167	100.0%

NOTE: Percentages are by column for each group except for the bottom row (which is by row).

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TABLE 4: Educational Plans to Reenter a Community College by PVCC Graduates, 1985

CATEGORY	AA/AS No.	AA/AS Pct.	AAS No.	AAS Pct.	DIPLOMA/ CERTIFICATE No.	DIPLOMA/ CERTIFICATE Pct.	TOTAL No.	TOTAL Pct.
FURTHER COMMUNITY COLLEGE EDUCATION WILL BEGIN:								
Summer 1985	4	7.0%	3	3.1%	1	7.1%	8	4.8%
Fall 1985	3	5.3%	12	12.5%	3	21.4%	18	10.8%
Other	3	5.3%	5	5.2%	2	14.3%	10	6.0%
Not Indicated	47	82.5%	76	79.2%	8	57.1%	131	78.4%
WILL ATTEND COMMUNITY COLLEGE:								
Full-Time	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Part-Time	10	17.5%	21	21.9%	6	42.9%	37	22.2%
Not Indicated	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Not Applicable	47	82.5%	75	78.1%	8	57.1%	130	77.8%
TOTAL RESPONDENTS	57	34.1%	96	57.5%	14	8.4%	167	100.0%

NOTE: Percentages are by column for each group except for the bottom row (which is by row).

TABLE 5: WORK CHARACTERISITCS AND EDUCATIONAL PLANS OF PVCC GRADUATES, 1985

PROGRAM	WORKING IN RELATED JOB F-T	WORKING IN RELATED JOB P-T	WORKING IN UNRELATED JOB F-T	WORKING IN UNRELATED JOB P-T	NOT EMPLOYED	WILL ATTEND 4-YR COLLEGE F-T	WILL ATTEND 4-YR COLLEGE P-T	WILL ATTEND 2-YR COLLEGE F-T	WILL ATTEND 2-YR COLLEGE P-T	OTHER	TOTAL
Business Admin.	4	2	1	3	2	6	2	0	1	2	23
Education	0	2	1	2	2	7	1	0	1	0	16
Fine Arts	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
General Studies	7	1	5	2	3	10	0	0	6	0	34
Liberal Arts	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	3
Science	3	1	1	0	1	5	0	0	1	1	13
Phys./Nat. Science	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
AA/AS SUBTOTAL	14	6	8	7	9	30	3	0	9	4	90
Accounting	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4
Business Management	5	0	3	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	11
Data Processing	5	1	6	0	5	0	1	0	7	0	25
Nursing	33	2	0	0	2	1	0	0	6	1	45
Police Science	2	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	1	0	6
Respiratory Therapy	9	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	13
Secretarial Science	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	4
Electr./Electronics	7	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	0	11
AAS SUBTOTAL	65	3	9	1	13	4	1	0	21	2	119
Drafting & Design	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Electronics	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
DIPLOMA SUBTOTAL	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Admin. of Justice	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
Arts & Crafts Prod.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Child Care	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3
Clerical Studies	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Drafting	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Electronics Service	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Health Technology	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Career Studies	9	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	16
CERTIFICATE SUBTOTAL	11	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	21
TOTAL	90	11	18	8	22	34	4	0	37	6	230

NOTE: The totals in the right-hand column do not necessarily reflect the number of students enrolled in a particular curriculum, as one student may be entered in more than one category.

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TABLE 6: LOGITUDINAL GRADUATE SURVEY DATA (1979-1985)

CATEGORY	Class of 1979 No.	1979 Pct.	1980 No.	1980 Pct.	1981 No.	1981 Pct.	1982 No.	1982 Pct.	1983 No.	1983 Pct.	1984 No.	1984 Pct.	1985 No.	1985 Pct.	Average No.	Average Pct.
Graduates Working in Related Field																
Full-Time	76	58.0%	66	44.0%	65	48.5%	64	41.0%	81	48.5%	74	44.6%	89	53.3%	74	48.1%
Part-Time	9	6.9%	16	10.7%	7	5.2%	14	9.0%	9	5.4%	14	8.4%	12	7.2%	12	7.6%
Total	85	64.9%	82	54.7%	72	53.7%	78	50.0%	90	53.9%	88	53.0%	101	60.5%	85	55.6%
Graduates Working in Unrelated Field																
Full-Time	13	9.9%	17	11.3%	16	11.9%	16	10.3%	13	7.8%	16	9.6%	19	11.4%	16	10.3%
Part-Time	6	4.6%	11	7.3%	10	7.5%	7	4.5%	18	10.8%	12	7.2%	7	4.2%	10	6.6%
Total	19	14.5%	28	18.7%	26	19.4%	23	14.7%	31	18.6%	28	16.9%	26	15.6%	26	16.9%
Graduates not Employed	12	9.2%	30	20.0%	22	16.4%	41	26.3%	28	16.8%	41	24.7%	22	13.2%	28	18.3%
Graduates Planning to Attend College or University																
Full-Time	27	20.6%	36	24.0%	37	27.6%	37	23.7%	49	29.3%	42	25.3%	36	21.6%	38	24.6%
Part-Time	9	6.9%	11	7.3%	8	6.0%	8	5.1%	10	6.0%	12	7.2%	14	8.4%	10	6.7%
Total	36	27.5%	47	31.3%	45	33.6%	47	30.1%	64	38.3%	58	34.9%	51	30.5%	50	32.5%
Graduates Planning to Re-enter Community College																
Full-Time	4	3.1%	1	0.7%	6	4.5%	1	0.6%	1	0.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	1.2%
Part-Time	27	20.6%	26	17.3%	16	11.9%	23	14.7%	32	19.2%	23	13.9%	37	22.2%	26	17.2%
Total	31	23.7%	27	18.0%	22	16.4%	24	15.4%	36	21.6%	24	14.5%	37	22.2%	29	18.8%
Other	2	1.5%	0	0.0%	3	2.2%	2	1.3%	3	1.8%	0	0.0%	17	10.2%	4	2.5%
CLASS SIZE	174		174		163		186		219		253		248		202	
NO. OF RESPONDENTS	131	75.3%	150	86.2%	134	82.2%	156	83.9%	167	76.3%	166	65.6%	167	67.3%	153	75.6%

NOTE: Percentages are by column (total number of respondents) except for those in the last row. Percentages in the last row are the response rates for the survey years.

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SURVEY OF GRADUATES--JUNE 1985

Please answer ALL of the questions that apply to you. The information you provide will be treated as confidential with answers being combined for group analysis.

Thank you.

Personal Information

_____
(Last Name) (First Name) (Initial)

_____ Male _____ Female

Home Address or Address to which your mail can be sent. _____
(Street or Route)

_____
(City) (State) (Zip Code)

Education at PVCC:

I atteneded PVCC **mainly:** _____ (Day) _____ (Night)

and was **primarily** a _____ (Part-time) _____ (Full-time) student

I am graduating from the following program(s): CHECK ALL APPLICABLE:

____Business Administration (AS)
____Education (AS)
____Fine Arts (AA)
____General Studies (AS)
____Liberal Arts (AA)
____Science (AS)
____Physical & Natural Science (AS)
____Accounting (AAS)
____Business Management (AAS)
____Data Processing (AAS)
____Nursing (AAS)
____Police Science (AAS)
____Respiratory Therapy (AAS)
____Secretarial Science (AAS)
____Electrical/Electronics (AAS)
____Drafting & Design (Diploma)
____Electronics (Diploma)

____Admin. of Justice (Certificate)
____Arts and Crafts Production (Certificate)
____Child Care (Certificate)
____Clerical Studies (Certificate)
____Drafting (Certificate)
____Electronics Servicing (Certificate)
____Health Technology Assistant (Certificate)

Career Studies Certificate
____Management
____Programming
____Business & Office
____Data Processing
____Electronics
____Child Care

Plans After Graduation: Check ALL responses that apply to you:

Employment: (includes self-employment)

____I currently have a job (or have made arrangements to start work in a job) that is **related to the field studied at PVCC** and I will work ____Full-time ____Part-time

____I currently have a job (or have made arrangements to start work in a job) **not related to the field studied at PVCC** and I will work ____Full-time ____Part-time

____I am currently not employed. (I have NOT made arrangements to start work after graduation.)

____I am actively seeking employment.

____I would like employment assistance from the PVCC Cooperative Education and Placement Office.

Education:

____I plan to transfer to_____
(name of four-year College or University)
and I plan to attend ____Full-time ____Part-time,
starting ____this summer ____this fall _____other
I ____have been
accepted by the college at this time
I ____have not been
That college was my: First Choice Second Choice Third Choice
(Please Circle one)
I plan to major in _____
(Program or major field)

____I plan to attend/return to _____Community College
(Name of Community College)
and I plan to attend ____Full-time ____Part-time
starting ____this summer ____this fall _____other
I plan to major in _____
(Program or major field)

Additional Categories: (Planned activity after graduation)

____Homemaker ____Military Service ____other:_____
(Please Indicate)

Would you be willing to return to PVCC and share your experiences (e.g. transferring or career experiences) with other students?
____Yes ____No.

FIGURE 2

September 25, 1985

Dear Graduate:

Each year at graduation rehearsal at Piedmont Virginia Community College we collect information concerning students' plans after graduation. The enclosed questionnaire is the same one used at graduation rehearsal. I would like to add information concerning your plans to what has already been collected.

Please complete the attached questionnaire and return it in the postage-paid envelope. Your individual responses will be treated as confidential information. Only results pertaining to your class, as a group, will be published.

Thank you for your help.

Sincerely yours,

Ronald B. Head

Ronald B. Head
Coordinator of Institutional
Research and Planning

RBH/lbrP

Enclosures

FIGURE 3

November 12, 1985

Dear Graduate:

One of the best sources of information available to Piedmont Virginia Community College is the follow-up survey of graduates. The results of that survey are used in making decisions about what programs should be offered and about how well the college is serving its community. A high response rate to the survey is needed to insure its validity.

We have not yet received a usable response from you. Please take the time to complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it to us in the stamped envelope provided. Your response of course, will, be treated as confidential information. Only summary information concerning the group as a whole is released.

Your response will help your college and the community. Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Ronald B. Head

Ronald B. Head
Coordinator
Institutional Research and Planning

RBH/lbrW

Enclosures

FIGURE 4

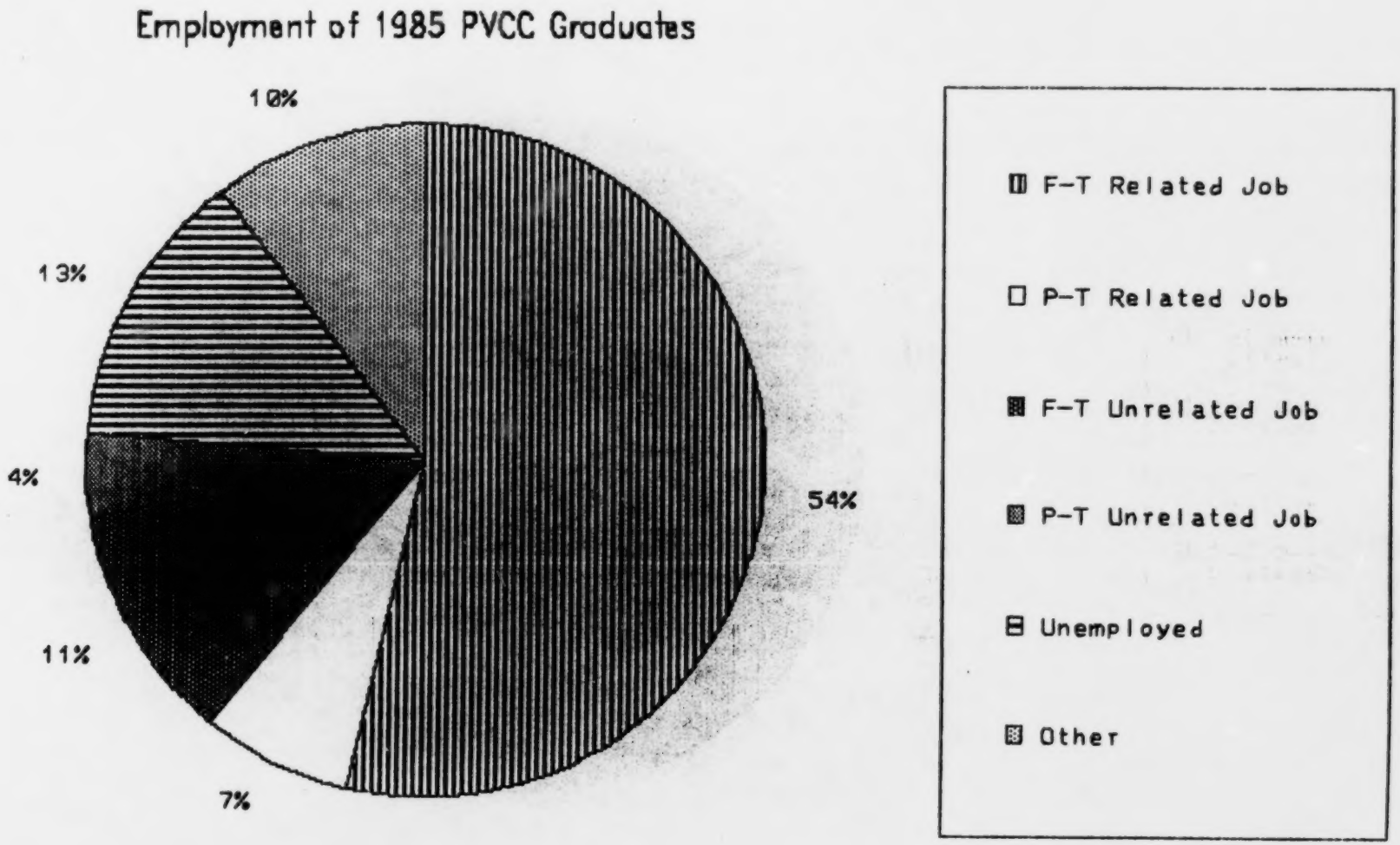

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FIGURE 5

Further Education of 1985 PVCC Graduates

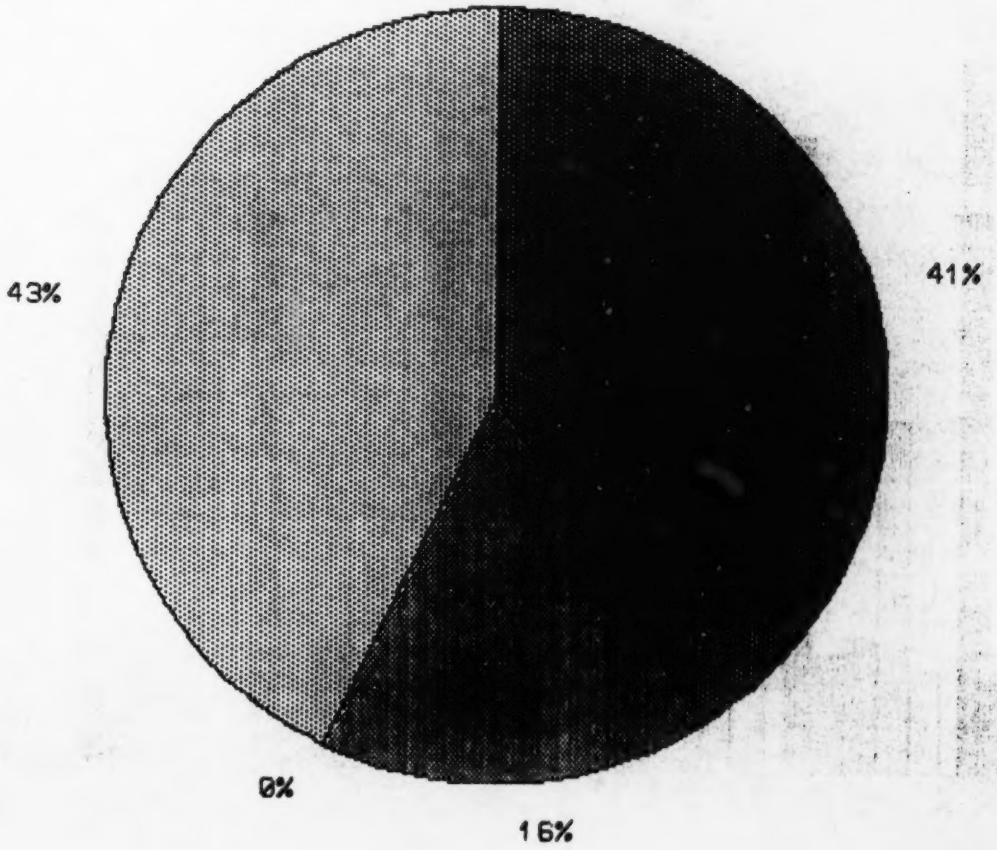

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FIGURE 6

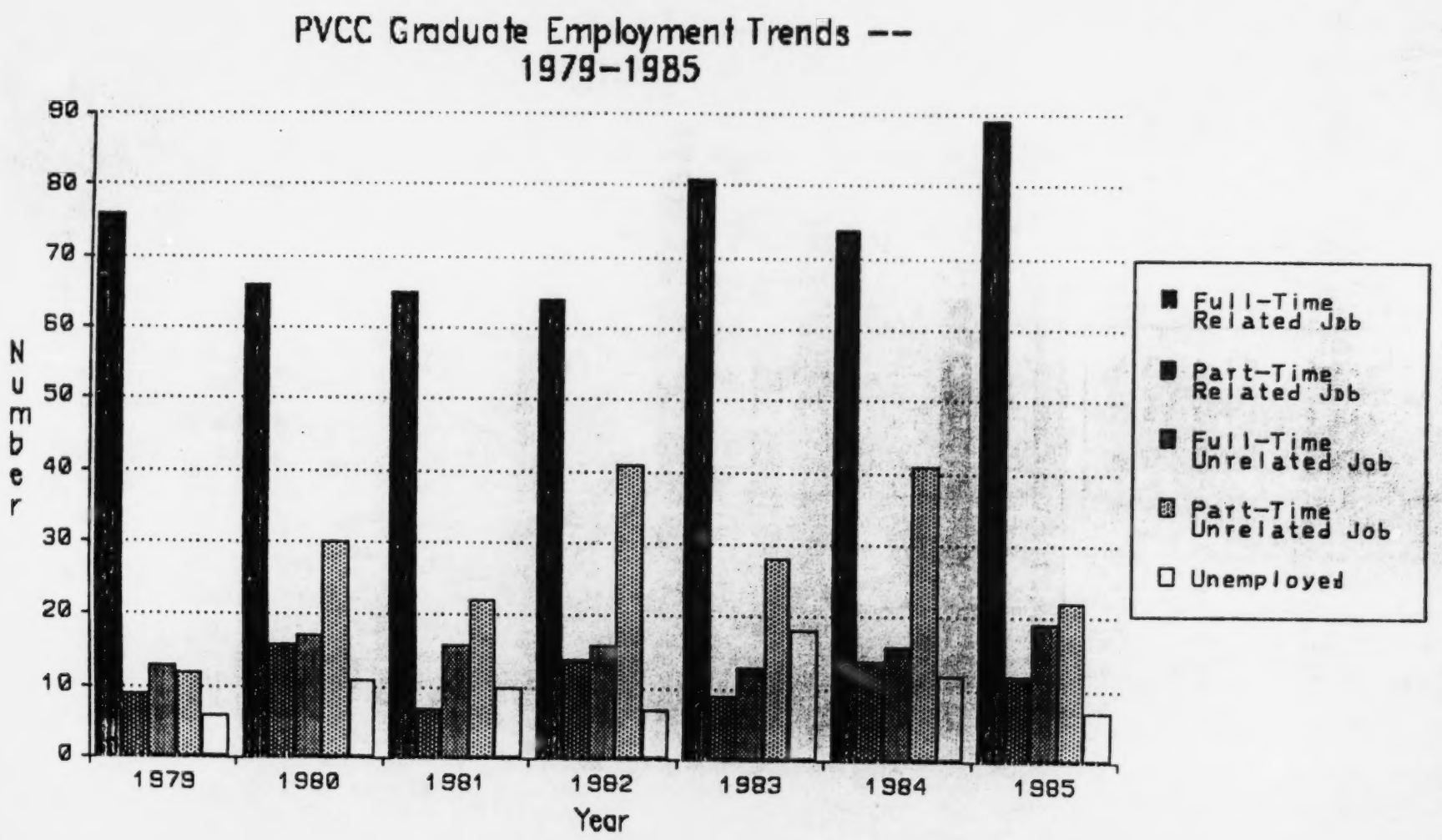

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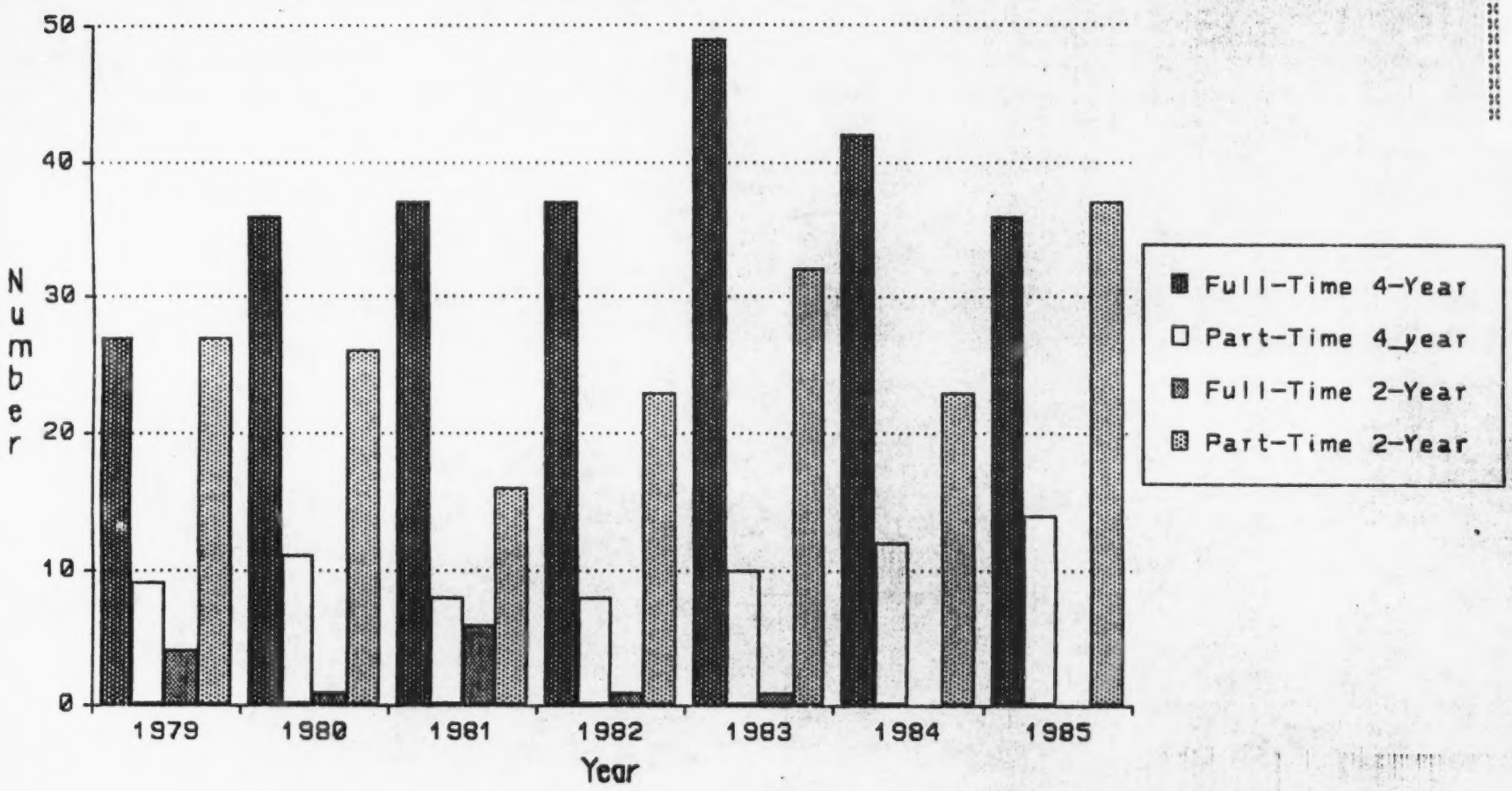
FIGURE 7

PVCC Graduate Further Education --
1979-1985



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